

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 PA-01 AGR-05 /023 W

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R 301219Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2878

INFO USDOC WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, KU

SUBJECT: GOK INTEREST IN INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL CONSULTANTS

REF: KUWAIT 1708; KUWAIT 1682

1. IN CALL BY AMBASSADOR, DCM AND ARP DESK OFFICER AHERNE ON GOK MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY TO DISCUSS OPPORTUNITIES FOR U.S. BUSINESS IN KUWAIT, LATTER SOUGHT ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE IN OBTAINING U.S. CONSULTANTS IN INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL SECTORS.

2. MINISTER, WHO IS NEW TO JOB, SAID HE WAS ANXIOUS TO SEEK OUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW INDUSTRIES IN KUWAIT. MINISTRY WAS NOT SUPPOSED TO PLAY PASSIVE ROLE, MERELY PASSING JUDGMENT ON PROPOSALS RECEIVED FROM MYRIAD SOURCES. MINISTRY HAS RESPONSIBILITY TO ACTIVELY AND AGGRESSIVELY GUIDE BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT COMMUNITY INTO INDUSTRY, COMMERCE AND LOCAL INVESTMENT ON BEST COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE. WHILE MINISTRY HAD COMMISSIONED SOME STUDIES RE INDUSTRIALIZATION, HE DISAPPOINTED WITH THE QUALITY OF WORK DONE. HE WONDERED WHETHER THE AMBASSADOR COULD HELP HIM OBTAIN SOME FIRST CLASS ADVICE. THERE FOLLOWED SOME DISCUSSION OF POSSIBILITIES OF EXPERTISE AVAILABLE THROUGH USAID AND THE US PRIVATE SECTOR. AHERNE AND AMBASSADOR THEN SUGGESTED POSSIBILITY OF HIRING CONSULTANT(S) TO WORK DIRECTLY WITH MINISTRY WHO HAD EXPERIENCE IN HELPING CITY OR STATE GOVERNMENTS (E.G. ATLANTA, CHICAGO, MINNEAPOLIS, ETC.) ATTRACT NEW INDUSTRY. MINISTER EXPRESSED KEEN INTEREST IN THIS IDEA.

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AMBASSADOR SAID HE WOULD MAKE INQUIRIES DURING MAY-JUNE WHILE ON

HOME LEAVE IN THE UNITED STATES.

3. MINISTER REITERATED HIS INTEREST IN ADVICE IN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR. DURING RECENT VISIT TO KUWAIT BY MISSISSIPPI GOVERNOR WILLIAM WALLER, MINISTER HAD TWO INTENSIVE SESSIONS WITH GOVERNOR AND JULIAN RUSSELL (CAL-MAINE FOODS) CONCERNING INTRODUCTION MODERN POULTRY AND EGG PRODUCTION INTO KUWAIT. GOVERNOR HAD PROMISED TO WRITE MINISTER CONCERNING CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH EITHER MISSISSIPPI STATE GOVERNMENT OR PRIVATE SECTOR WOULD BE WILLING TO PROVIDE A POULTRY EXPERT AT KUWAITI EXPENSE. MINISTER SAID HE MOST ANXIOUS MOVE FORWARD AND ASKED AMBASSADOR'S ASSISTANCE IN ENSURING MISSISSIPPI DELEGATION PROVIDES PROMISED LETTER SOONEST.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: A) REQUEST USAID OR OTHER APPROPRIATE AGENCY BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS WITH AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON MID-MAY POSSIBILITIES OF PROVIDING TO GOK, ON REIMBURSABLE BASIS, COMPETENT ADVISER ON INDUSTRIAL PROMOTION; B) REQUEST STATE, IN CONSULTATION WITH USDOC, CONTACT MR. PAUL FUGATE, MISSISSIPPI MARKETING COUNCIL, 2001 STATE OFFICE BLDG., JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI TO REMIND HIM OF GOVERNOR'S PROMISE OF LETTER (FUGATE WAS IN ATTENDANCE MEETINGS) AND TO PASS ON MINISTER'S LATEST REMARKS RE POULTRY CONSULTANT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: woolflhd
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975KUWAIT01864
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750151-0784
From: KUWAIT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975044/aaaaadhi.tel
Line Count: 85
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 KUWAIT 1708, 75 KUWAIT 1682
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: woolflhd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 AUG 2003 by MartinML>; APPROVED <01 DEC 2003 by woolflhd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOK INTEREST IN INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL CONSULTANTS
TAGS: BEXP, KU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006